

# What Would Happen If We Stopped Vaccinations?

These diseases still exist and can become common again  
- and deadly- if vaccination coverage does not continue  
at high levels.

## Measles

**Before measles immunization was available, nearly everyone in the U.S. got measles.** An average of 450 measles-associated deaths were reported each year between 1953 and 1963.

In the U.S., **up to 20 percent of persons with measles are hospitalized.** Seventeen percent of measles cases have had one or more complications, such as ear infections, pneumonia, or diarrhea. Pneumonia is present in about six percent of cases and accounts for most of the measles deaths. Although less common, some persons with measles develop encephalitis (swelling of the lining of the brain), resulting in brain damage.

In the U.S., widespread use of measles vaccine has led to a greater than 99 percent reduction in measles compared with the pre-vaccine era. If we stopped immunization, measles would increase to pre-vaccine levels.

**Protect Someone You Love – Immunize!**

**For more information:**